

7. (Currently amended) A Moulding tool for the manufacture of precision articles, especially contact lenses, characterised by comprising:

- (a) a number of pairs of shape-determining tool inserts having contact surfaces,
- (b) a first tool half having a first tool holder and a second two-tool halves having a second (10,12), each tool half (10,12) containing a tool holder (16 and 18; 102), wherein each of the first and second tool holders contains a number, corresponding to the number of pairs of shape-determining tool inserts, of continuous recesses which are aligned in pairs with corresponding recesses in the other tool holder when the moulding tool is closed, wherein into each of which one of each pair of tool inserts is clamped into one of the recesses in the first tool holder while the other of each pair of tool inserts is clamped into one of the recesses in the second tool holder one tool insert (20 and 22; 100) of at least one pair of shape-determining tool inserts (20,22;100) having contact surfaces (54),
- (c) positioning means (32,26,46,48), by means of which the tool holders (16,18; 102) when the moulding tool is closed are positioned relative to one another in such a way that each of a pair of shape-determining tool inserts (20,22;100) is opposite the other and interacts with the other to form a mould cavity, and
- (c) a number, corresponding to the number of pairs of shape-determining tool inserts (20,22;100), of continuous recesses (58; 104) which are aligned in pairs when the moulding tool is closed, in each of the tool holders (16,18; 102) and
- (d) clamping means (42,60,72,88;106,112,114,118,120,122,124), which are associated with one of the recesses (58; 104) in the tool holders (16,18;102) and with one of the tool inserts (20,22;100), which contain one or more spring-action clamping elements (72;112,120), which have first and second contact surfaces (62 and 76) and are of such a dimension that when the tool insert (20,22;100) to be clamped is in the clamped position, the clamping means (42,60,72,88;106,112,114,118, 120,122,124) are clamped and the first contact surfaces (62) of the clamping means (42,60,72,88;106,112,114,118,120,122,124) adjoin the wall (70) of the recess (58;104) and the second contact surfaces (76) of the clamping means (42,60,72,88;106,112,114,118,120,122,124) adjoin the tool insert (20,22;100), whereby
- (e) wherein the shape of the second contact surfaces (76) of the the clamping means (42,60,72,88;106,112,114,118,120,122,124) is complementary to the shape of the contact surfaces (54) of the tool inserts (20,22;100) to be clamped,
- (f) and wherein the second contact surfaces (76) of the clamping means (42,60,72,88;106, 112,114,118,120,122,124) inserted in two aligned recesses (58;104) of the tool holders (16,18;102) are in alignment with one another, and
- (g) the moulding tool is produced by the process according to any one of claims 1 to 4.

8. (Cancelled previously)

9. (Currently amended) The Clamping means or moulding tool according to one of claims 76 to 8, whereby the clamping means (42,60,72,88,106, 112,114,118,120,122,124) contain one or more tightening discs (112,120).
- 10-13. (Cancelled previously)
14. (Currently amended) A mMoulding tool according to one of claims 7 to 13, whereby the clamping means (42,60,72,88) contain an actuating element (42), by means of which the spring-action clamping element(s) (72) of all the clamping means (42,60,72,88) associated with a tool holder (16) are actuated simultaneously.
15. (New) The molding tool according to claim 7, wherein a washer is inserted between the clamping means, and wherein the spring-action clamping element(s) is or are under the defined initial tension by means of the washer when the clamping means are inserted in the recesses of the two tool holders.
16. (New) The moulding tool according to claim 7, wherein the contact surfaces of the tool inserts to be clamped have cylindrical outer faces and the second contact surfaces of the clamping means have one or more annular or cylindrical inner faces which are complementary to the cylindrical outer faces.
17. (New) The moulding tool according to claim 9, wherein two or more tightening discs are arranged directly next to one another.
18. (New) The moulding tool according to claim 9, wherein the tightening discs are arranged at several levels at fixed distances from one another.
19. (New) The moulding tool according to claim 7, wherein the clamping means contain a centring sleeve and a clamping sleeve which is slidable inside the centring sleeve, wherein the outer face of the centring sleeve adjoins the wall of the recess, wherein the centring sleeve has a conical inner face, wherein the clamping sleeve has a conical outer face which is complementary to the conical inner face of the centring sleeve, and wherein when the clamping sleeve is clamped, it is pushed into the centring sleeve, so that the conical outer face of the clamping sleeve adjoins the conical inner face of the centring sleeve.
20. (New) The moulding tool according to claim 7, wherein the first and second tool holders are support plates the upsides of which face one another when the moulding tool is closed, wherein at least four contact surface are provided on the upside of each of the two support plates.
21. (New) The moulding tool according to claim 20, wherein the upside of one of the two support plates has two index bushes while the upside of the other of the two support plates has two index bolts, wherein each index bolt faces one index bush and interacts with each other so as to ensure that the two support plates are aligned with one another precisely.
22. (New) The moulding tool of claim 21, wherein the two support plates are joined together by a tool hinge.

23. (New) The moulding tool of claim 22, wherein one of the two support plate can be pivoted about the tool hinge by 180 degrees, so that each contact surface on the upside of one support plate connect onto one of the contact surfaces on the upside of the other support plate.
24. (New) The moulding tool of claim 23, wherein the moulding tool has a guiding means for facilitating pivoting of one of the support plates.

REMARKS

The amendment filed on August 4, 2003 was considered to be non-compliant because it did not include proper status identifiers for claims 1-24 of the amended claims. Accordingly, a corrected version is submitted above.

Please address all correspondence to Thomas Hoxie, Novartis Corporation, Corporate Intellectual Property, One Health Plaza, Bldg. 430 East Hanover, NJ 07936-1080. The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any other fees which may be required under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 and 1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0134.

Respectfully submitted,

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